

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-45 (canceled)

1 Claim 46 (previously presented): A method for filtering a  
2 plurality of candidate search results to remove  
3 near-duplicates, the method comprising:

4 a) for one of the plurality of candidate search  
5 results, determining whether the one candidate search  
6 result is a near-duplicate of another of the plurality  
7 of candidate search results by

8 1) comparing a cluster identifier of the one  
9 candidate search result with a cluster identifier  
10 of the other candidate search result, and  
11 2) if the cluster identifiers of the one and the  
12 other candidate search results match, then  
13 concluding that the one candidate search is a  
14 near-duplicate of the other candidate search  
15 result; and

16 b) in response to a determination that the one  
17 candidate search result is a near-duplicate of the  
18 other candidate search result, rejecting the one  
19 candidate search result thereby defining a filtered  
20 set of search results including only those of the  
21 plurality of candidate search results that have not  
22 been rejected.

1 Claim 47 (previously presented): A search filter for  
2 processing a plurality of search results to remove  
3 near-duplicates, the search filter comprising:

4           a) a near-duplicate determination facility for  
5       determining, for one of the plurality of candidate  
6       search results, whether the one candidate search  
7       result is a near-duplicate of another of the  
8       plurality of candidate search results, and wherein  
9       the near-duplicate determination facility includes a  
10      comparison facility for comparing a cluster  
11      identifier of the one candidate search result with a  
12      cluster identifier of the other candidate search  
13      result, and wherein if the cluster identifiers of  
14      the one candidate search result and the other  
15      candidate search result match, then it is concluded  
16      that the one candidate search result and the other  
17      candidate search result are near-duplicates; and  
18           b) a filter for rejecting the one candidate search  
19      result if it is determined that the one candidate  
20      search result is a near-duplicate of the other  
21      candidate search result and passing the one  
22      candidate search result if it is not determined that  
23      the one candidate search result is a near-duplicate  
24      of the other candidate search result, thereby  
25      defining a filtered set of search results including  
26      only those of the plurality of candidate results  
27      that have not been rejected by the filter.

Claims 48-67 (canceled)